

A person is walking away from the camera on a wet, sandy beach. They are wearing brown shorts and are barefoot. In their right hand, they hold a long, thin wooden paddle. In their left hand, they hold a dark blue surfboard. The wet sand reflects the person and the objects they are carrying. The background shows the ocean waves breaking on the shore.

Savoir Faire

Volume XLVII
Spring 2009

Bossier Parish
Community
College

Presents

*Savoir
Faire*

Spring 2009

At the end of the editorial process, there is a sense of relief. The staff can put the issue to bed and call it a day. Up to that moment there is the excitement of reviewing the work of fresh, new voices in the literary and visual arts communities. This semester the SAVOIR FAIRE STAFF had an especially difficult time limiting the number selections to include because so many of the submissions were of such high quality. To all those who sent work in, whether your work was included or not, keep up the good work. To those of you who are reading this, we hope that we have presented the best of what was submitted.

As with any literary journal, SAVOIR FAIRE STAFF members owe a huge debt of gratitude to a lot of people whose assistance has proven invaluable to the production of this issue. Michelle Triplet, Marjorie Harper, and Tammy Kennedy, with Student Life, are among that number. Chris Bagwell, who promoted our efforts through electronic messages campus-wide, is also deserving of similar praise, as is Rusty Johnson, for scanning the artwork included. Anna Nelson and Cieltia Adams, English instructors, were a tremendous help in selecting works to be included. Thanks are owed to Holly French, English, and Larry Powell, Telecommunications, for making their respective department resources available. A special thank you goes to Danny Williams for coordinating the contributions of artworks to this publication.

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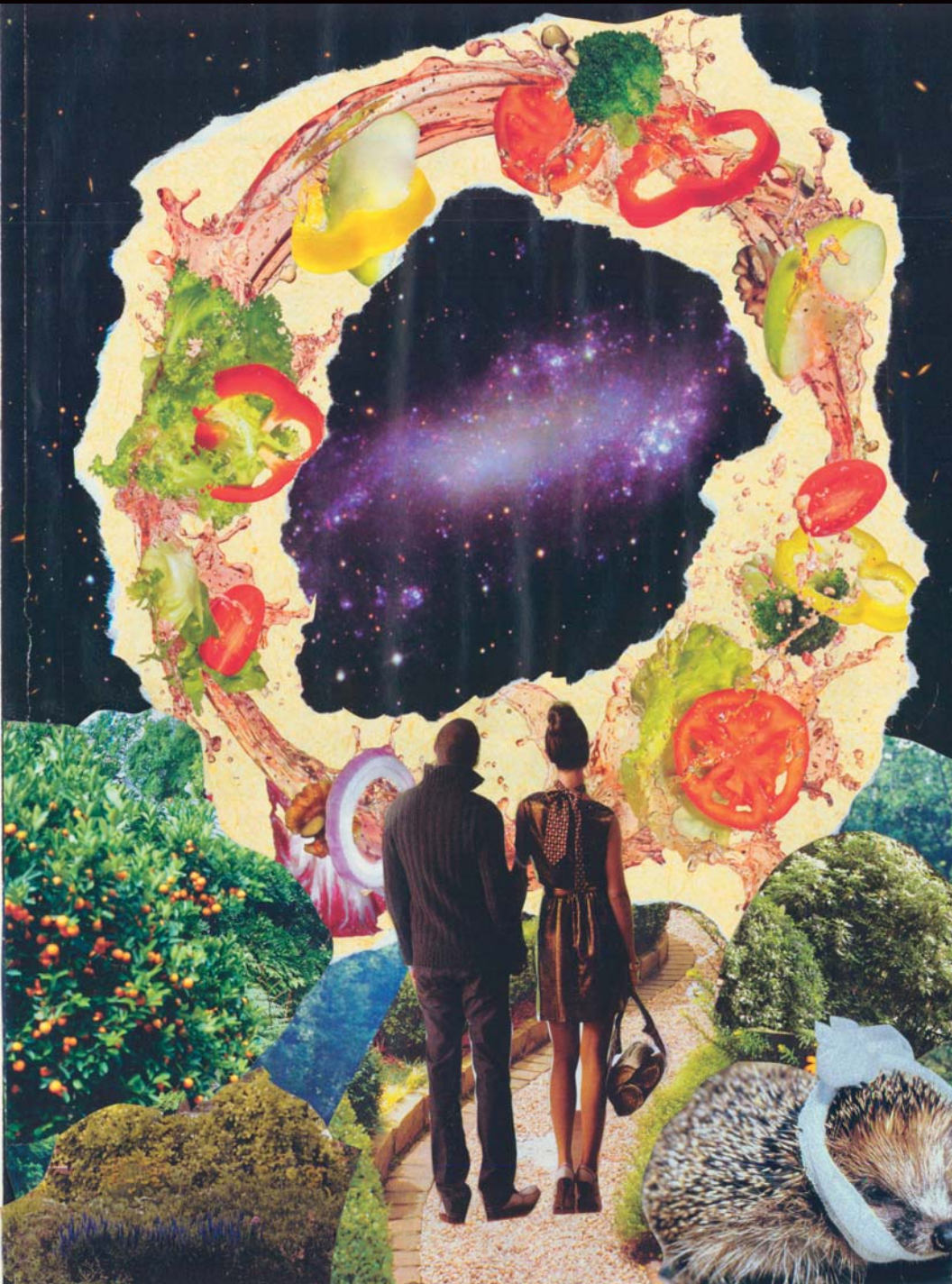
Table of Contents

Judgment Day.....	1
Tanesha Morris	
Dream Girl.....	2
Ryan Sellers	
Sight.....	4
Jennifer Adkins	
One of the Best Female Singers	5
Dewayne Jackson	
The Blue Lights	6
Winner of the Savoir Faire Writer's Award	
Mattie Reed	
The Bluesman.....	9
Centerfold	
Armond Gilmore	
Mom.....	11
Sarah Spooner	
Dear Friend.....	12
Tanesha Morris	
Mariah Carey.....	13
Dewayne Jackson	
Out of Focus	14
Jennifer Adkins	
Remember Where You Came From	15
Ryan Sellers	

The Jump	16
Elizabeth Graves	
Another Game	17
Stephanie Quick	
Midnight Raid	18
Jared Coyle	
She's a Lady	20
Jamie Callender	
Praying for the Troops	22
Armond Gilmore	
Untitled.....	23
Caitlin Sullivan	
Beautifully Timeless.....	24
Cecily Stevenson	

Judgment Day

The magnitude of respect
Brought back to a place
Where the truth was exposed
Not just words on a page
Scattered through the mind
Taken through the night
Yearning, still divided
Thoughts torn apart
Waiting patiently
For that superlative day to arrive
When the imaginings will be converted into the truth
Shameless feelings set aside
Who can determine another's fate?
Based on an earth filled with hate
Only hoping not to be led astray
Is there one ready to be taken today?



Title: Dream Girl
Author: Ryan Sellers

Place
Postage
Here



I seem to have come to terms with my reality
Too much to do in order to forget responsibility
Sleeping too little or way too much
Never prepared using others as my crutch
I seem independent alas but a lie
Lord help me to surrender, help me to get by
Let me understand what my actions have done
Prepare me for the battle I have not yet begun
Everything's so close yet so far away
Living my life as a struggle to get through each day
My problems seem big, my burdens not light
But deep down inside something just isn't right
The need to be whole to accept what I've done
To stop, look for problems when there really are none
I know that I falter and most times I fall
My goal is to learn to love me through it all
Once I have conquered my doubt and my shame
Turned over my guilt, my pride, and my pain
I'll start to grow up and live life like I should
Beginning is the hardest that much is understood
I'll try and I'll succeed and I'll try and I'll fail
But at least I won't feel trapped inside of this hell
Self doubt is a killer, it takes so much away
I'm getting over myself, and I'm starting today.



I stood there handcuffed and ashamed. Who was this person I had become? I had no idea who I was anymore. I was a stranger, a criminal. Like a caged animal, I sat in my cell as other inmates passed, staring from the outside into my personal hell. They tapped on the glass as they smiled and laughed at me, mocking my tears and obvious embarrassment. I simply buried my head in my hands and sobbed uncontrollably wondering how I had fallen so far. I could feel their eyes burning into me, yearning for me to lift my head for merely a moment, so they could capture a glimpse of my fear, pain, and humiliation. Eventually, I glanced up only to catch a peek of the exposed urinal in the cold, cement box to which I had been condemned. My weeping pathetically worsened. I would later come to realize that many elements in my life were going to have to change drastically, or I would forever be a failure, and the person I was deep down inside, would disappear into darkness, never to be found again.

I had a strangely perfect childhood. My family was, and still is to this day, so oddly functional that most people called us “The Cleavers”. My parents made sure my brother, sister, and I grew up in a positive, supportive, and stable environment. They never argued, and it was obvious that they loved all of us more than anything. There was never a shortage of love in our household. For some reason, when I entered high school, I began to rebel against my upbringing. I found myself getting involved in the wrong crowd and doing things to fit it and be accepted. That time in my life would be the beginning of an eight year journey on a path plagued with destructive behavior that would ultimately lead to me hitting rock bottom.

I got married to Ken on July 24, 2004. I was only twenty years old. I was young, naïve, and had not formed my own identity; Ken was selfish and arrogant. Unable to avoid the ageless cliché, “it was doomed from the beginning,” we endured a highly unstable relationship for two and a half years before making the impetuous decision to get married. I was unhappy with myself, and our unhealthy relationship only perpetuated my discontent. I do not know what possessed me to think I could be happy in a marriage, while I was so miserable in every other aspect of my life. I convinced myself that I desperately needed Ken’s approval, and in receiving his approval, it would somehow give me a sense of validation of my self worth. Every day a piece of me perished, and the happy, loving, outgoing girl I had once been was fading away with every tear I cried. I smiled less and less each day, and soon . . . I found joy in nothing.

After only ten months of marriage, I made the most difficult choice of my life up until that point. I filed for divorce from my husband on May 13, 2005. For a brief moment, I felt relief. I told myself that getting divorced was the answer to all my problems, but there were much deeper issues at hand. I soon started feeling an overwhelming sense of failure. In my mind, I had failed my husband, family, myself, and most importantly, God. While ending my marriage was the best decision at the time, I did not understand that it was only a starting point to repairing all the broken pieces of my life and of my soul.

I started to drink quite frequently and began going out to bars and clubs almost every night of the week. At the time, I was a cocktail waitress at Horseshoe Casino and Hotel. Working late hours and making ridiculous amounts of money every night only fueled my need to go out and “let loose.” I would go to work at 5:00 p.m., get off at 2:00 a.m., stay out drinking until 7:00 a.m., go home and sleep for a few hours, and get up and do it all over again. My family saw me slipping away and becoming more distant with each passing day. I was purposely absent from most family dinners and other functions because I did not want anyone to see the circles under my eyes or smell the beer and whiskey from the night before. I was the poster child of pain and depression, and I worked diligently to try to keep that a secret. My efforts were in vain because my issues were all too apparent to everyone. I was mean and unlovable, and I would be horrible to others, especially if I saw that they were happy. I would try to bring others around me down in hopes that in some way it would make me feel better about myself. It did not.

On a random Wednesday in April of 2006, I was out as usual. I was driving from one bar to another in downtown Shreveport when I saw blue lights flashing in my rear view mirror. I knew everything I had been doing for a year had just caught up with me. Officer Cason, with the Louisiana State Police, asked me to step out of my vehicle. After failing a field sobriety test, on went the handcuffs, and off I went to jail. We arrived at Caddo Correctional Center where I agreed to a breathalyzer test. I blew well over the legal limit of .08, and I was put into an orange jumpsuit, fingerprinted, and booked with a charge of Drinking While Intoxicated. The reality of the whole situation started setting in as I sat in a cell by myself. I do not think that it was necessarily the thought of being in trouble with the law that was so upsetting to me. I was more terrified at the idea of having to face my parents, who I had disappointed so much already.

My mother posted bail only three hours after my arrest. I felt so ashamed as I walked out and saw her. The drive home was deafeningly

silent. When the time came to finally face my father, I completely broke down. The look of sadness and disappointment on his face was enough to make me want to hurl myself off a cliff! He could not even look me in the eye, and it broke my heart. That was it! That was precisely the moment that changed my whole outlook on life. Who was I? I did not know the person that was standing there. I cried myself to sleep that night, and I woke up a changed person.

It has been almost three years since the night of my arrest. Unlike so many others, I definitely learned my lesson. I no longer drink and drive and do not plan to ever do it again. Going through that experience has changed my life and has made me a better person. I want to be proud of myself and make my family proud of me as well. Carl Rogers said, "The curious paradox is that when I accept myself just as I am, then I can change." I had to acknowledge and accept all my flaws in order to move forward. I no longer seek validation from anyone or anything. My faith in God and my relationship with my family has only become stronger because of that experience. For so long, I did not feel as if I deserved forgiveness for all my failures. Then, I realized that God had forgiven me; I only needed to forgive myself. I am a much happier person because of experiencing failure. I have let go of who I was in the past, and I am focused on who I want to be now and in the future. I have noticed that I am more motivated and much kinder than I used to be.

Most people have defining moments in their life when they can choose one path or another. I think the secret is recognizing those moments and embracing them. We are given opportunities and choices every day that will help us shape our present and our future. What a person does with those opportunities will define that person's character and how their soul speaks to others in this short life we live. I am very blessed and fortunate to have recognized a chance moment to turn my life around. If I had not, it could have led to a lifetime of failure.





Mom

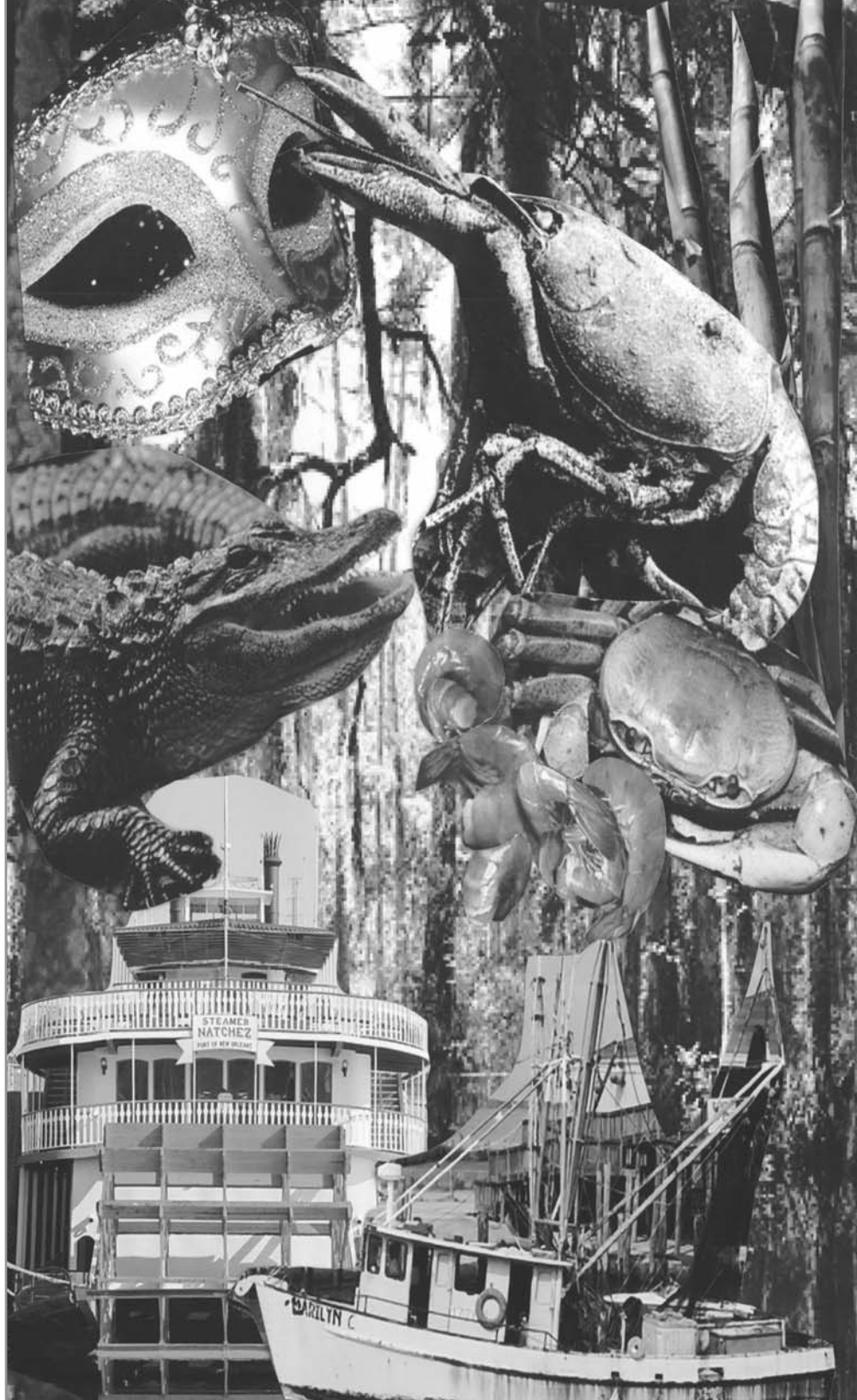
You say I never really listen.
You tell me what I should do.
But I never do it.
I'm sorry I've let you down.
But you still come around.
You say you love me.
And that you only want the best for me.
Every week you call me on the phone.
But all I want is to be left alone.
I'm growing up.
But you won't give up.
I find comfort knowing you won't let go.
Because when I fall to the bottom,
You'll pick me up, dust me off,
And tell me everything is okay, even when it's not.

Dear Friend

You lift me up
Add value to my life
Holding my secrets safely
In your heart they hide
My old nightmares have died
New dreams are born
You still believe in me
Even when my spirit's torn
I always have painful cheeks
Because you make me smile
Making our quiet time
Seem so worthwhile
Pushing me forward
Instead of pushing me back
When I don't want to let go
You hold me tighter instead
When my soul is filled with ashes
You blow them away
Like lilies in the field
On a summer's day
I admire your resilience
In me you bring out the best
Having you near
Makes me truly blessed



Waterstained photographs attempt to let me view my clouded past
Lost lovers and best friends all seem to ride into the sunset
What is this half life existence I've created for myself
Water bottles and french fries have become my daily indulgence
People always seem just a step away from being my imagination
I feel like I'm sitting high atop a mountain watching myself think
These thoughts all run together making it difficult to focus
I think I need a personal planner to help me stay on track
Alas my organizational skills refuse to allow me to do so
I'm gasping for air but not the normal day to day kind
I guess the old photographs make a valid point
Life is better seen through a skewed eye



The Jump

I stand on the edge ready to jump
But something pulls me back
Is it logic, is it hope
No it's fear
Fear to begin, fear to end, fear to start all over again
If I stay I die
If I jump I live
I'm not jumping to my death
But jumping to my future
The future I want to have
The future I deserve
Do I take this leap
Do I brave the unknown
Or do stay where it's safe, familiar, and warm?
What do I want for my life?
So here I go braving the future
Getting rid of the past
This has to be the last
Curtain call, unhappy ending
The future is mine for the taking
I'm born anew
Ready to jump on through
I take the step off the edge
Not knowing what's there
But ready to take the fall
And find out what's there
At the end of the jump

Another Game
(Inspired by Jordan Hilton)

We practice hard to play the game.
When points aren't made, who is to blame?
Having fun is all that matters.
The other team has the ball, and everyone scatters.
The boys are ready and take their positions.
We steal the ball; it is time for redemption.
We lost the last game and don't want to lose another.
My mom is in the stands, and so is my little brother.
We made our points; the game is almost over.
The blue team should have brought a four leaf clover.
They try to make it, but it's too late.
Red team wins; we win sixteen to eight.

The building's windows lit up briefly as the flash bangs detonated, the sound muffled only slightly by the interior walls. Shouting followed as armed men swarmed the building, quickly neutralizing any threats present, although most were already incapacitated by the concussion grenades. After a few moments, an "all clear" was given as the officer was waved into the building. Captain David Turner, a regular army officer working with the Special Forces, made his way through the mess of the large house. The non-com in front of him, Staff Sergeant Mackswell, led him through the downstairs chaos and upstairs to where prisoners were being assembled. The Special Forces leader, Gunnery Sergeant "Pinhead" Jules, gave Turner a sober nod before greeting him.

"Captain, these three here seem to be the cell leaders." He gestured with a gloved hand at the two men and one woman kneeling at his feet. Each rebel was wearing civilian clothing with what looked like insignia attached to the collars. One of the men was bleeding from a gash in his forehead, while the woman had a communicator earpiece dangling from her neck.

"Detail two men to take them to the transport and have them directed to the mobile command station. I will remain here with you and the rest of your men to sort through the rubble. Good work, Sergeant." His orders were crisp, but toned with an underlying respect for the commandos. "It seems I chose well for a secret security force. The local garrison will be please that I am taking care of their problems." He felt like cursing the inept local grunts, but refrained as he looked at a nearby soldier. After all, this was their home, too.

"Lieutenant Jones," he began to his second in command, a young officer native to the region, "Organize a few details and begin searching the surrounding homes. I want any suspicious persons brought to the command post and thoroughly interrogated." He stepped through the main room and into a bedroom, currently set up as a relay post. "When are the inspectors to arrive?"

"They are waiting for your signal, sir, as ordered," Mackswell stated quickly.

"Then we had best get out of their way." He turned to leave when he heard the sound coming from deeper inside the room. He turned quickly, his pistol leaving the holster for the first time that night, aiming at a recessed closet near the back wall. Mackswell's R19 came up as well, and he moved on Captain Turner's subtle command. Cautiously, his carbine

steady, he moved to the left of the doorway. With a flick of his thumb, he turned on a lamp attached to the barrel and swept the closet slowly, letting the beam of light settle on a lump of clothes where the sound, the whimpering sobs of a young boy, resonated.

Turner lowered his pistol and walked across the room, a sinking pit in his stomach.

Hours later, Turner looked through the mirrored window at the boy, guessing his age at no more than ten. Lieutenant Jones walked over with a cup of coffee, offering it to his mentor. "Our troops did well today, sir. The inspectors believe we can analyze this..." He drifted off as Turner raised a hand.

"We did well, for now. We had surprise on our side. We had weeks of training. And there, in that room, is something that could undo all of our efforts." He took the drink and sipped it, careful not to let the liquid burn his tongue.

"I'm sorry sir?"

"Surely you understand. That boy is the son and nephew of the three cell leaders we captured tonight. The rebels present were his friends, his family, his world. We have just taken all of that away. To him, we are exactly what he has been told all of his life. I watched as he was interrogated by Dr. Miles. She made every effort to be friendly, to put him at ease. She gave him a coke, some candy, a blanket; all she asked was his name and where he went to school."

Jones looked into the small room, seeing the drink and candy bar lying untouched on the table. "At least he's using the blanket."

"He put that on only after she left. He hasn't said a word. A casualty, a statistic, that's all he is to us right now." He spit out the words, as if repulsed by them. "Soon the press will learn of him. Most will paint him the same way, but the underground, the rebels, to them he will be rallying point. A focus of how oppressive our government is."

"Secret police performing midnight raids does the same thing," Jones pointed out.

Turner was silent for a moment, secretly proud that his protégé could confidently voice an opinion. Finally, progress. "You are right, except we are not police, and these are not petty crooks. The infrastructure found at that building points to a well-funded organization. When we release an estimate, the people and the government will know we are dealing with a serious threat. I hope."

"You hope. What is his hope?" Jones pointed to the kid, who quickly grabbed the candy bar.



Title: She's a Lady
Author: Jamie Callender

Place
Postage
Here



Untitled

Constant connection
We see further rejection?
Mass confusion fought with silence
Are we left alone to fend for ourselves?
We've been given colors black and white,
But do we also see the red and blue?
Throw up our hands, tear the music
And curse at the cloudy sky
But do we see?
Do we realize?
The notes of a symphony are combined
With silence and explosion
To affect the hearts of those receiving
The raging storms of utmost destruction
Will eventually resolve
Into the yellow after the rain



Savoir Faire

Beautifully Timeless

Cecily Stevenson

The man who does not read good books has
no advantage over the man who cannot read
~ Mark Twain

Bossier Parish Community College

Submission Requirements For Fall 2009:
**SUBMISSIONS MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN
AUTHORIZATION FORM.**

Names should appear on **APPLICATION FORM ONLY**,
not on submissions.

All entries will go through a blind submission process and will be chosen by a panel including the LITR 101 class, student volunteers and various instructors. You are allowed five entries maximum per semester.

LITERARY ENTRIES must be typed using 12pt
Times New Roman font and double spaced.

Short stories should be between 1 and 3 pages.

Written entries should be saved in rtf and submitted once electronically (by email) and once in hard copy format (be sure to omit names for the hard copy).

All **ART ENTRIES** should be submitted as jpg files with 300 dpi.
Probably the easiest way to properly transfer 2D artwork to an electronic format is by scanning the piece. Check out local print or sign shops for storing art electronically on disk or on jump drive. If for some reason this route is not an option, please contact Candice Gibson
(savoirfaire@bpcc.edu) for further options.

Any original works left with the advisor will be discarded one month after the semester if they are not promptly retrieved.

Bossier Parish
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